

REMARKS

After entry of this Amendment, claims 1-13 will be all the claims pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended. Support for the amendment to claim 1 may be found in the specification, e.g., at page 22, lines 5-7.

No new matter has been added.

Entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Syudo (EP 1151751).

In response, and while not admitting that the rejection is appropriate, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the gel comprises at least two polymers comprising acrylic acid/sodium acrylate copolymer and at least one of polyacrylic acid and sodium polyacrylate. Applicants respectfully submit that Syudo does not teach or suggest a hydrous gel comprising a gel comprising at least two polymers comprising acrylic acid/sodium acrylate copolymer and at least one of polyacrylic acid and sodium polyacrylate. Further, Applicants submit that claims 2-8 are believed to be patentable over Syudo by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)
Application No.: 10/516,452

Attorney Docket No.: Q72632

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

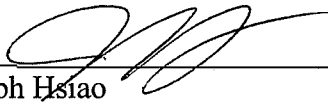
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